

## KIDS AS PLANNERS STRENGTHENING STUDENTS, SCHOOLS, AND COMMUNITIES THROUGH SERVICE-LEARNING



This comprehensive Guidebook provides teachers, administrators, students, and community partners with a step-by-step guide to planning, designing, and undertaking **KIDS** projects. Chapters focus on Getting Started, Developing and Implementing a Project Plan, Assessing Learning, and Celebrating and Sustaining Projects.

Easy-to-use templates and tools illustrate key concepts, and can be photocopied for your own use.

**KIDS** is sure to be an invaluable tool for your service-learning team! *Copies are \$19.95 plus \$6.00 shipping and handling.*

## REFORM, RESILIENCY, AND RENEWAL: KIDS IN ACTION



Richly illustrated with photographs and clear-cut examples, **REFORM, RESILIENCY, AND RENEWAL: KIDS IN ACTION** is an exciting synopsis of the first ten years of **KIDS** Consortium. Not only is this book a celebration of our accomplishments, it also offers examples on how to start and implement a **KIDS** project, identify community partners, and network with a diverse community of practitioners.

*This book sells for \$6.95 plus \$4.00 shipping and handling.*

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**KIDS CONSORTIUM**  
215 Lisbon Street, Suite 12  
Lewiston, ME 04240  
207-784-0956  
www.kidsconsortium.org

## SERVICE-LEARNING AND ELECTIONS

▶ As we collaborate with educators around the country, we often start our workshops by asking participants to describe the attributes of an active, engaged citizen. Without exception, voting always appears high on the list of "actions and behaviors" that are expected of citizens. It is disturbing, then, to look at data (described below) showing a drop in youth voting over the past 30 years, especially when studies demonstrate that young voters are more likely to be lifelong voters.

This fall, we have an opportunity to involve our youth in service-learning projects focused on the elections and voting. Not only can service-learning projects be connected to broader discussions and lessons on the rights and responsibilities of citizens in our democracy, but they can provide students with real, hands-on opportunities to learn about the voting process as well as multiple perspectives about key issues presented by candidates at the local, state and national levels. This newsletter includes many ideas for projects and resources – all non-partisan. Let's engage the next generation of active, involved citizens!

### WHAT'S HAPPENING NATIONALLY

In America, there are 80,000 elections each year. Though America has a strong history of voting pride, it is currently ranked 139th out of 172 countries in voter turnout since 1945. America's 59 year average of 48.3% turnout is drastically lower than top-ranked Italy at 92.5%. Youth voter (18-24-year-olds) turnout recently experienced the largest drop in our nation's history. The greatest decline was between 1978 and 2000, with an average drop of 13 percentage points over that period. Average youth voter turnout was 28 percentage points less than 25+ -year-old voters in the 2000 presidential election. In fact, currently less than half of 18-19-year-olds are even registered to vote!

A number of national campaigns have been working tirelessly to find new and exciting ways to get youth interested in voting. Many groups with strong pop culture influence have used their images to promote

### JUST WHO IS VOTING FOR, ANYWAY?

In January, a t-shirt sparked a controversy that spread like wildfire among America's youth, as well as America's voting advocates. The t-shirt, which stated "Voting is for Old People," was designed by Urban Outfitters, a clothing and housewares company with products aimed at the 20-30 year old market. Whether this t-shirt was tongue-in-cheek as the company claims, or promoting an anti-voting attitude as it has been accused of, students and organizations spoke out in yet another milestone in the nation's debate, just who is voting *for* anyway?

voter registration and turnout by holding local events that students and adults can get involved in. "Rock the Vote," founded in 1990 by members of the recording industry, started the trend. Then in 1992 MTV launched its "Choose or Lose" campaign followed by other groups such as "Smackdown your Vote!" sponsored by the World Wrestling Entertainment, a coalition of punk rock groups called punkvoter.com and "Hip Hop Summit Action Network," a group chaired by hip hop mogul Russell Simmons and Dr Benjamin Chavis.

Other programs focus specifically on classroom projects. "First Vote" provides free information, nonpartisan videos and

reference guides to teachers who are willing to do a two-day voting information program and sustain it in their curriculum ([www.closeup.org/frstvote.htm](http://www.closeup.org/frstvote.htm)). Many schools host mock elections encouraging those too young to legally vote to get in the habit of voting, a practice that will hopefully remain when they turn 18 and beyond. "Kids Voting" combines educational classroom learning with an authentic voting experience on election day ([www.kidsvotingusa.org](http://www.kidsvotingusa.org)).

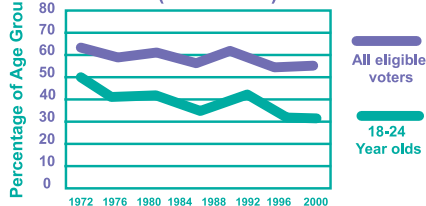
### WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MAINE

Maine has been revolutionary in terms of voting practices and has strong turnout results to back up such practices. Maine boasts the second highest average voter turnout in the country between 1980 and 2000. Maine also had the overall highest voter turnout in the 1992 and 1996 elections. On the forefront of progressive voting practices, Maine is one of 6 states that allows voter registration at the polls on Election Day. However, between 1978-1998 Maine had the third highest drop in youth voter turnout with a decline of 18% in midterm elections. Maine hopes to counteract youth voting apathy with recently passed legislation that allows 17-year-olds to vote in the primaries if they will be 18 at the time of the national election.

If you want to get involved at the local level, the Youth Voting Media Project invites middle and high school students to create

(Continued on Page Five)

VOTING IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS  
(1972-2000)



Source: United States Census Bureau.  
"Reported Voting and Registration by  
Race, Hispanic Origin, Sex, and Age  
Groups: November 1964 to 2000"

<sup>1</sup>[www.rockthevote.com](http://www.rockthevote.com)

<sup>2</sup>"IDEA: Voter turnout from 1945."

[http://www.idea.int/voter\\_turnout/voter\\_turnout\\_pop2.html](http://www.idea.int/voter_turnout/voter_turnout_pop2.html)

<sup>3</sup>Donovan Carrie and Mark Hugo Lopez. CIRCLE.

"Youth Voter Turnout in the States during the 1998 Midterm and 2000 Presidential Elections" Oct 2002

<sup>4</sup>Donovan Carrie and Mark Hugo Lopez

<sup>5</sup><http://www.Closeup.org/frstvote.htm#why>

<sup>6</sup><http://www.democracy-nc.org/improving/voter-turnout.pdf>

<sup>7</sup>Donovan Carrie and Mark Hugo Lopez

## VOTING: IT'S A START FROM THE DESK OF THE FOUNDER, MARVIN ROSENBLUM

► “And don't forget to wear a tie!” My father's instructions preparing me for my first voting experience continue to resonate fifty years after the fact. I've read about small African countries where 98% of eligible voters cast ballots, though some have to walk for as many as three days to do so. I wonder at the contrast between this scenario and our own shameful voter participation statistics. Despite the fact that we have absentee ballots and a myriad of “get out the vote” efforts, the United States has some of the lowest turnout rates of any democracy in the world. This election year, young voters aged 18-24 have been targeted by various get out the vote campaigns. In 1972, 43% of this age group voted, but in 2000 only 29% did so. Voting is important in its own right, but it is also an elegant metaphor. Clearly, if far fewer than half of our young people complete the comparatively simple act of casting a ballot, our participatory democracy, with its need for more complex involvement, is at risk.

During the first week of August, the KIDS Consortium convened a group including state Department of Education representatives and teachers from Maine, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, Professor Marcus Bruce from Bates College, and the staff of KIDS. The goal of the institute, many months in the planning, was to find ways that the fifty participating teachers could “live democracy” and, in turn, facilitate that process with their students. The institute was called “Living Democracy” and was described by Professor Bruce as follows:

“This six-day institute adopts a service-learning approach to the study of history and citizenship and invites educators to explore the ways in which their local communities can become contexts in which they discover the varied and complex ways that Americans define citizenship. This course argues that interactions with local community organizations, institutions, and civic leaders can provide teachers and their students with a richer and more profound understanding of concepts like citizenship, civic culture, and democracy. More importantly, service-learning encourages the active participation of learners in the community in which they live, allowing them to learn while they provide service to and work alongside members of that community.”



*August 2004 Living  
Democracy Participants*

I will never forget an undergraduate methods course that I took from a very distinguished professor. The course was called “Individualizing Your Teaching” and the description talked about how different learning styles and rates of learning require “good” teachers to accommodate their instruction to those differences. For months, three hundred of us met and were lectured to on this topic. At the end of the semester, our professor asked us for questions and comments. A young woman spoke immediately, “If that's what you want us to do, do it to us!”

The Living Democracy Institute didn't make the same mistake. Each day, based on reading assignments, participants discussed the art and craft of teaching and then had a public forum on the specifics of teaching democracy. The seating arrangement consisted of a circle of fifty chairs, some of them empty. Professor Marcus Bruce didn't preach or lecture, or even teach in a “conventional” way. He asked what the participants thought; he facilitated; he coached; he asked questions. Often, he took one of the empty seats and listened as the give and take among participants built. When energy or ideas lagged, he asked another question, synthesized ideas, summarized what he heard. Those of us in the circle learned from our experiences, from our “guide.” We spent afternoons in interactive exchanges, exercises, and examples of implementing service-learning to engage students in benefiting their communities and in learning from the communities they were benefiting.

Lewiston/Auburn, Maine transformed the teaching and learning experience from rhetorical to experiential. The participants used the town as text, exploring its history, demography, assets, and needs. Community people came in and course participants went out and slowly, Living Democracy began to emerge as living democracy.

By the end of the Institute, participants had plans for using the KIDS model of service learning back home in their classrooms, sharing the magic of the model with their colleagues, and preparing for follow-up sessions with the KIDS Consortium staff and partners. The Institute went a step further than doing it to them and did it with them. The momentum is building to bring new voters to the polls and into their communities as participants in democracy.

## CONSORTIUM NEWS

### VISTA CHANGES AT KIDS!

► The KIDS team is excited to welcome AmeriCorps\* VISTA member Kerry Salvo to our staff, as we say THANK YOU and bid farewell to Sara Drapeau, our VISTA in 2003-04. Sara is returning to graduate school at Boston College to study school counseling. We wish Sara the best and look forward to seeing her back in Maine soon!

Kerry will be spending the year working on several important projects—planning our annual Student Summit, Hall of Flags and

Project Citizen Showcase and organizing Maine's first Capitol Forum, a civic engagement forum involving members of the CHOICES program; working to develop and to recruit members for a Youth Advisory Council to the KIDS Board of Directors; and attending conferences around the state to share information about service-learning. Kerry will also be researching and developing resources to help youth, educators and community-based non-profit organizations increase awareness of service-learning and to establish strategies to engage youth in meaningful leadership roles in their

schools and communities through service-learning projects.



Kerry is a resident of Portland, Maine and a recent graduate of Boston College, having studied Sociology and French. During her four years in Boston, she was dedicated to mentoring and developing extracurricular programming for low-income urban youth at an after-school center. Kerry is part of a larger statewide AmeriCorps\*

VISTA team organized by Communities for Children and Youth. To learn more about the program, please visit:

[www.communitiesforchildren.org](http://www.communitiesforchildren.org)

## WANT TO ENCOURAGE YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN VOTING?

### RESOURCES FROM NATIONAL YOUTH VOTING CAMPAIGNS:

**www.youthvote.org** A national nonpartisan coalition of diverse organizations dedicated to increasing political and civic participation among young people and increasing public awareness about the value of participation in democracy in the electoral process

**www.closeup.org/frstvot.htm** First vote is a nonpartisan classroom-based voter registration, education and citizenship program for high school students that provides teachers with videos and resource guides free of charge.

**www.youthvote.net** Freedom's Answer: voter turnout campaign led by our nation's youth. Participants aim to register one voter, get ten people to pledge to vote, provide election eve reminders and work the polls in some capacity. There are currently 1500 high schools involved across the country.

**www.kidsvotingusa.org** Kids Voting USA is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan, organization that fosters an informed, participating

electorate by educating and actively engaging young people and their families in voting and other elements of effective civic engagement.

**www.rockthevote.com** Can be contacted to run a voter registration drive and supply information and paraphernalia.

**www.vote-smart.org/** A website with the mission of creating an informed electorate. Great research resource with info on registration, absentee ballots as well as current representatives around the country.

### LOCAL YOUTH VOTING CAMPAIGNS

Check with the Secretary of State in your state or with your state chapter of the League of Women Voters for specific initiatives where you live. Some New England links are provided below:

### VISIT THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS:

**www.lwvme.org** The League of Women Voters in Maine seeks high school students to be trained to work hotlines for voters seeking nonpartisan information. (207) 622-0256

**lwvma.org/index.shtml**  
Massachusetts - (617) 523-2999

**www.lwvnh.org**  
New Hampshire - (603)-225-5344

**www.lwvri.org**  
Rhode Island - (401) 434-6640

**www.lwvofvt.org**  
Vermont

### VISIT THE WEBSITE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN YOUR STATE:

**Maine:**  
**www.maine.gov/sos**

**Massachusetts:**  
**www.sec.state.ma.us**

**New Hampshire:**  
**www.sos.nh.gov/index.html**

**Rhode Island:**  
**www.state.ri.us**

**Vermont:**  
**www.sec.state.vt.us**

### Elections (Continued from Page One)

Public Service Announcements about youth voting that will be showcased in a statewide competition in October ([www.maine.gov.sos/youth](http://www.maine.gov.sos/youth)). The League of Women's Voters of Maine invites student volunteers to be trained and man voter hotlines providing information to voters with questions (to get involved, send an email to [bethrich@maine.rr.com](mailto:bethrich@maine.rr.com)).

Wherever you are located, if you are interested in getting involved in a national or local campaign, the resource section of this newsletter provides internet sites with lots of ideas and information. If you think your class might be interested in doing a service-learning project on elections and voting, please turn to page 3 of this newsletter for specific ideas. And remember on November 2nd to encourage everyone to get to the polls to show that voting is for ALL people!

VOTE VOTE VOTE



ELECTION

### WHAT IS IT BOARD GAME

KIDS Consortium has developed a teaching game to introduce three "commonly confused" terms; Community Based Learning, Community Service, and Service-Learning. How do you know the difference? What defines a high quality service-learning project?

Using the KIDS As Planners principles of academic integrity, student ownership, and apprentice citizenship, players read through scenario cards and determine which terms to place the scenario in.

Players walk away with new insights into what service-learning is.

Game includes facilitator's instructions. Price is \$15. To purchase please contact the Consortium office.



### 16TH ANNUAL NATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING CONFERENCE: EDUCATING FOR CHANGE.

March 16-19, 2005  
Long Beach Convention Center and  
Hyatt Regency Long Beach  
Long Beach, California  
**WWW.NYLC.ORG**

Now you can support **KIDS CONSORTIUM** through payroll deduction!

### MAINESHARE

*Charitable Choices for Maine's Future*

*MaineShare funds 36 statewide organizations including **KIDS CONSORTIUM** addressing environmental, economic opportunity, peace and justice, cultural diversity, the arts, and health service issues.*

**Enroll your workplace for the 2004 campaign online at:**

**[www.mainesshare.org](http://www.mainesshare.org) (207) 622-0105 OR [giving@mainesshare.org](mailto:giving@mainesshare.org)**



## SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECTS AND ELECTIONS

### VOTER INFORMATION WORKSHOPS

Middle school students plan workshops on various political, social and economic topics related to elections.

Students are arranged into teams that design workshops around issues they feel are relevant to the upcoming elections. Workshops themes include: the history of elections, comparative study on the candidate's opinions of "hot topics," and the role the media plays in elections. Parents, guardians and community members are invited to attend the workshops in an after school event. The

students share what they learn with the community through oral presentations, exhibits and handouts.



### HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS MENTOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS IN A MOCK ELECTION

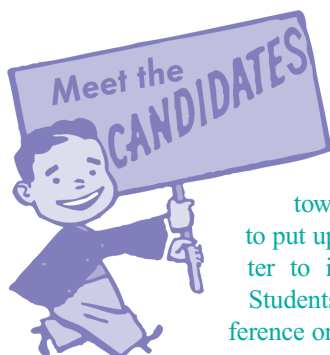
High school students study the election process in their social studies class. They learn about the campaigning process, including the ways in which candidates use advertising, the issues candidates are most vocal about and the methods of getting voters to the polls on Election Day. They invite the local municipal clerk or registrar to speak about the voting process. Armed with this information, the high school students go to the local elementary school and share their findings with the students who are holding a mock election of their own. The older students assist the elementary students in preparing for speeches and making posters to share their beliefs. On Election Day, the high school students help run the polls and celebrate the hard work of all the candidates.



### CANDIDATES NIGHT

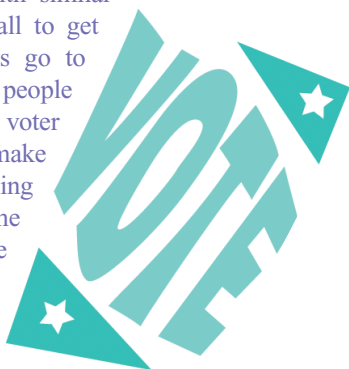
Middle school students invite local candidates to their school for Candidates Night. In order to prepare for this event, the students research press conferences and design questions they want to ask the local candidates based on research of the candidates' opinions. Students brainstorm different ways of getting the message out to the

town about the Candidates Night. They design advertisements to put up around school, around the town, or in the school newsletter to inform parents and community members of the event. Students emcee the event and run the night as a formal press conference or debate would be run.



### AFFECTING VOTER APATHY

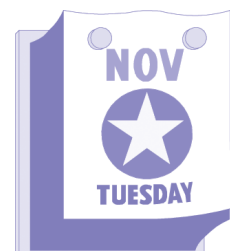
High school students study voter trends and realize there are certain populations who are not well represented in the polls. To combat this problem, the students design a Public Service Announcement sharing some of the statistics of who votes and who doesn't-and why it is so important to be heard through your vote. Students also design brochures, posters, and a website with similar themes. After contacting the town hall to get voter registration forms, the students go to share their PSA and information with people in their communities. By having their voter registration card on hand, the students make it very easy for people to register, making them more likely to participate come Election Day. The students target some communities where voter turnout has been low in the past.



### STUDENTS PERFORM THE IMPORTANCE OF VOTING

Elementary students study the origins of the voting process in America and pick some key points highlighting the importance of voting. Students write and design skits that emphasize these events. Students also create a playbill with a synopsis of the history of voting and the importance of each individual's vote.

The skits are performed after school for an audience of parents and members of the community. At the performance, the students arrange for voter registration cards to be available for any parent or community member who might not be registered.



## SERVICE-LEARNING 101

### GETTING STARTED: KIDS SERVICE-LEARNING

**NOVEMBER 4 – MAINE -  
BATES COLLEGE, LEWISTON**

**NOVEMBER 5 – NEW HAMPSHIRE -  
HAMPTON INN, CONCORD**

► Are you thinking about starting a service-learning project in your classroom or community organization? Would you like to improve an existing project or idea? Have you tried a project and had a rocky start?

This day-long "Getting Started" workshop is designed to help educators use the KIDS Consortium's service-learning model. You will come away from this workshop with lots of tools, strategies and enthusiasm to begin a KIDS service-learning project in your school and community! Please call KIDS Consortium at 207-784-0956 to sign up for the workshop nearest you!

Or email at:

tmarin@kidsconsortium.org

### ADDITIONAL PLACES TO MEET US THIS FALL

(KIDS will either be presenting or have a presence with our exhibit)

**OCTOBER 14 – Blaine House Conference on Volunteerism, Augusta Civic Center, ME**

**OCTOBER 14 – Maine Association of Middle Level Educators-Sugarloaf, ME**

**OCTOBER 15 – Maine EDTech Conference Augusta Civic Center, ME**

**OCTOBER 21-22 – Maine School Management Association-Augusta Civic Center, ME**

**NOVEMBER 1 – Office of Substance Abuse Prevention Provider Day, Augusta, ME**

**NOVEMBER 4-5 – Maine Youth Action Network (MYAN) Conference, Bar Harbor, ME**

**NOVEMBER 8 – MAHPERD-Physical Education Teacher Conference, Samoset-Rockport, ME**

**NOVEMBER 18-19 – Maine Principals' Association Conference- Holiday Inn By the Bay-Portland, ME**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**JANUARY 25-27**

**TRAIN THE TRAINER, STAGE NECK INN  
YORK, ME**

A two-day, two-track workshop for educators who have implemented service-learning projects and are familiar with the KIDS model.

Track I is for educators new to service-learning and Track II is an advanced session for educators who have already been through previous training.

**MARCH 16-19**

**NATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING CONFERENCE  
LONG BEACH, CA**

KIDS Consortium staff will lead two workshops. Look for us on the agenda and in the exhibit hall!

**MARCH 31-APRIL 1**

**THE FIFTH ANNUAL SERVICE-LEARNING SUMMIT  
USM GORHAM CAMPUS, ME**

Teams of students and community members from Maine and New England come together to celebrate student service-learning successes; network with other students, teachers and community partners; and learn skills that will enhance service-learning programs.

**APRIL 8**

**CAPITOL FORUM/CHOICES  
STATE CAPITOL, AUGUSTA, ME**

The Capitol Forum on America's Future is a civic education initiative of the Choices for the 21st Century Education Project at Brown University. KIDS Consortium will host the first annual Capitol Forum on America's Future in Maine. High schools students from around the state will come together for a whole day at the State Capitol building to participate in deliberation with each other, with public policy makers and legislators on what role the U.S. should play in an ever-changing world.

**MAY 6**

**HALL OF FLAGS SERVICE -  
LEARNING CELEBRATION AND PROJECT CITIZEN  
CELEBRATION, STATE CAPITOL, AUGUSTA, ME**

This year we are celebrating two events!

1. The 5th Annual Hall of Flags Celebration- Project Displays to celebrate student work; KIDS Service-Learning Awards

2. The 2nd Annual Maine Project Citizen Showcase is to celebrate student work designed to influence public policy related to issues selected by the students.

**JUNE 27-JULY 1**

**KIDS CONSORTIUM SERVICE-LEARNING CONFERENCE  
SUNDAY RIVER, ME**

Save the date! Join KIDS Consortium and educators, students, and community organizations from around New England and a conference packed with speakers, hands-on workshops, and networking – focused on raising the next generation of active, engaged citizens!